

## APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

### 2014 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Public Allies, Inc.

Application ID: 14ES156964

Program Name: Public Allies Iowa AmeriCorps Competitive

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

#### Reviewers' Summary Comments:

##### Strengths:

The applicant details the need for AmeriCorps jobs as an employment option for youth from ages 18-24. Cost benefit research is shared to make a case for investing in these youth instead of paying for social support.

Despite a recovering economy, the demand for services has increased for non-profit organizations. The applicant cites data that despite an increase for need for services, non-profits are downsizing their staff. AmeriCorps volunteers are seen as a resource that can help to fill this gap.

The applicant adequately describes the need for capacity building at their locations.

The applicant provides relevant and recent data to support their claims of need for services.

The applicant demonstrates clearly that there is a significant need to provide job opportunities, training and skills to Iowa's youth, ages 18-24, wherein 10% of the state's population in this demographic are neither working or in school.

The applicant uses compelling data to demonstrate the need locally and nationally. By using data to demonstrate the long-term effects having a limited education or limited job skills, the applicant makes an even more compelling argument for the program being proposed.

The applicant presents a cohesive Theory of Change in both the Logic Model and the narrative. It is clear how the applicant hopes to make change in communities by engaging opportunity youth and building organizational capacity.

The Logic Model is detailed and logical.

The applicant provides adequate detail regarding their proposed intervention and activities.

The applicant provides sufficient research to support linkages between activities and proposed outcomes.

The applicant presents a logical and thoroughly discussed plan for addressing the job skills needs of the target population, Iowa youth, ages 18-24. The proposal is logical, easy-to-follow and compelling.

Weaknesses:

The applicant details a two-pronged need: engaging Opportunity youth and building non-profit capacity. Research is provided to support both of these tracks, but no data is provided to demonstrate success incorporating the two together. It is unclear if this is a model that has been attempted in other places and if there lessons to be learned.

The applicant does not demonstrate clearly that the proposed program is an effective means for producing the goals and outcomes described within the narrative.

No data was provided regarding past performance.

The applicant does not fully discuss its past performance in relation to implementing and operating capacity building programs.